

Third Interview

Q: Last summer when we talked you referred to your tour of duty here as consisting of three one-year phases, where you learned, formulated strategies and plans, and then institutionalized what you have established.

How would you evaluate your second year now?

A: Well, the second year was driven by a number of outside forces. The most significant was a new Division Engineer who had a different management style than the old Division Engineer. Both effective, both different. Driven also by the Reagan administration coming in and the Carter administration going out and the development of the concept of giving the government back to the people. Signals very quickly came down through the system. People were stating over and over again that government should get off the people's backs.

At the start of 1981 I established a number of objectives. They were to improve the District, improve mobilization training, and improve the way we do business. I eased back on the main thrust of the job of getting the projects through the planning cycle, approved and built, and this was probably unfortunate.

Now it is clear, having overcome many of the management problems, our people are now working almost full time in getting projects built. So my time spent on extraneous things has dwindled. My role as a planner and mover of projects is almost full time, characterized by our reorganizing to establish an independent Planning Division. The institutionalizing of this division and having it in place with the bugs worked out when I leave in June is first priority. So, I suppose, the second year had many changes in it for the system and for me.

Q: You mentioned the change in administration in Washington. There was also a change in the Chief of Engineers in the past year. Would that have a significant impact?

A: Well, I think so, but not because General Bratton doesn't think like General Morris or doesn't have the same goals and objectives. I think most Chiefs of Engineers reflect the national policy and it was very natural that, when General Bratton came in, he began to reflect the policies of the Reagan administration.

It was probably because of the change of Chief of Engineers that we saw the impact of the Reagan administration quicker; while we were looking for General Bratton's policies, what we saw coming were the administration's policies. The timing of the changing of the Chief and the administration was such that both events seemed to reinforce each other.

Q: Where does the change in the administration hit you the hardest?

A: People started saying that the government should get off your back. Let's make a decision. Let's move things. This chorus supported the quote that I love so well, that delay is the most devious form of denial. The thrust of the Reagan administration is to make things happen. Stop delaying. Make decisions on the information you have and move on. That was very evident when I took my Marshall project before the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors.

Q: What's the Marshall project?

A: It is a Marshall, Minnesota, flood control project. I had to go up to the Board of Rivers and Harbors with it. The members of the board reflected the sense that they would not go back to get more data or to restudy, but announced, "Let's look at what you've got, let's make a decision and be decisive, and move on." So most of those generals on the Board were reflecting General Bratton's attitude of "Let's move."

Q: So getting government off people's backs comes to moving projects faster rather than stopping them?

A: That's right. And it comes to "Hey, let's make decisions." We also translate it into "Let's be more concerned about the dollar. Let's move things now because we are continually having personnel cuts."

So we get, I think, a sense of urgency of "Let's get something done," more so than with the Carter four years, where it was "Let's have more study." Or, "Let's answer more environmental concerns." And we got bogged down with the bureaucracy. I think in the Reagan realm of things there is less bogging down with the technocrats and bureaucrats.

Q: What about regulatory functions?

A: I think the new administration will take a hard look at the rollback and reducing the Corps' 404 and section 10 permitting. But we in the St. Paul District are in a very environmentally sensitive region. We have the potholes, the wetlands, and the 10,000 lakes and the people that we serve are locked in step to preserve these wetlands. So they favor Corps involvement in the regulatory program. But there are other parts of the country where I think there should be a rollback and the Corps should get out. The administration reflects this rollback philosophy -- less regulatory, less involvement.

The difficulty is that while we are regulating, with federal regulations that are uniform countrywide, the regions are so drastically different. So I feel that Minnesota and Wisconsin don't like being under the big umbrella. They would like federal regulation to be more sensitive to the regions and more reflective of what they want.

I think that the 404 program now in effect is working well. Every one understands it. I guess my approach for this region would be to fine-tune it and retain it, not roll it back.

Q: Do you have local demand to maintain the regulatory program?

A: Well, we have local demands and supports. We had one of the two Corps of Engineers public hearings on the new 404 permitting regulation carried in the Federal Register. General Smith held the meeting here and Wisconsin and Minnesota came out loud and clear that they don't want to rollback the program or take the discretionary authority away from the District Engineer and move it to Washington. They more or less like the manner and the way things have been handled in the old regulation, and the trend of going to more nationwide permitting is pretty suspect. They have great concern about this proposed change.

But I think the administration will look at the new proposed change of 404 and see that the lessening of the regulatory functions through more nationwide permits will be a way of getting the government off of people's backs.

Q: Are you establishing a Planning Division this year?

A: The groundwork is being laid. The thrust of Generals Heiberg and Smith is concern that planning is not getting the visibility it should and the planning system is not working the way it should.

Much of what needs to be changed in the planning procedure is not in my province to affect. One thing that I can do is set up a Planning Division. For some time I fought against going to a full Planning Division. The reason I was against it was that I found it takes less expended energy on our part not to be the front runner until higher headquarters are ready for such change.

Citing an example -- everyone was advised, "Go to the Planning Division." The New York District ran through the exercise and put their paperwork in, and then the RMO (Resource Management Office) disapproved it and said, "Go back and do more justification." I felt that if I waited, the groundswell would be such that when I put in my paperwork, I could do it with less wasted time and energy.

General Smith said he though the DE should be the planner and should be more involved in planning. So I came back and met with all my supervisors and project managers. We talked about the Planning Division concept. One of the key factors that helped make my decision was the attitude of support from supervisors and the functional managers who obviously felt that getting ready to go to construction and turning dirt should have higher priority than planning projects.

But the whole thrust of having a Planning Division would be to give more visibility to planning. I began to realize that all my study managers and planners were a little more frustrated with the system

while my project managers who handle design and engineering were not. Obviously our District was giving more support to engineering than to planning.

To give planning equal footing, I decided that the only thing I could do was to move to a full Planning Division. Now we have the Deputy District Engineer working with the corporate body to come up with a proposed organization. But I started to make the informal changes immediately. I have built a new office next door to my office for the Planning Chief. The Chief of Engineering Division is in an office on the other side of me. So physically and psychologically we are creating a balance between engineering and planning. Also, as a consequence, I'm more involved in the planning process.

Q: You talked about planning problems last year. You talked about that as a basis for moving branch chiefs around. The guy who sits in planning for eight years, I think you said, doesn't see anything come out and gets frustrated.

A: Well, as we're coming up with the organization of a new Planning Division and a new Engineering Division, we are identifying spaces at the GS-12 or 13 level that will allow interchange of planners and engineers between the Engineering Division and the Planning Division. The reason for this, as we develop the organization, is to build in an executive development program. My greatest fear is that, by splitting planning out of engineering, we polarize the

activities and have a greater split and less support. Planning needs engineering to complete their studies. By cross training and having the executive development program, I hope that we will reduce the chances of polarization. This program will give a broader base for the young executives when their turns come to get promoted. Hopefully, they won't have tunnel vision. They will have served in more than one position.

Q: Last year you emphasized as important two particular programs or project areas: the Red River basin and the GREAT I study. Where do these stand now?

A: As you know, GREAT is the "Great Environmental Action Team," established to study the upper Mississippi River. The study team was a joint team composed of federal agencies and the respective states. The GREAT I study has been completed and published. The District Engineer implementation report has been finished and published. The Division Engineer notice that endorses both GREAT I (St. Paul) and GREAT II (Rock Island) has been completed. So we have sent the GREAT studies, the implementation studies, and the Division Engineer notice to Washington.

The studies basically promote a balanced use of the river -- navigation, fish and wildlife refuge, and recreation.

We have determined that we will recommend funding in 1983 for the GREAT I implementation up to the \$3 million level, which will fund up to the basic program. The basic program is probably the two-thirds point of what the total recommended GREAT I wanted.

The last one-third is the big dollar value items. It is going to take many years to get there. So I would see a yearly budget of around \$3 million for a number of years to help us implement GREAT.

Obviously, there is some opposition. There are some folks from the navigation interests who will lobby in Congress to keep us from spending the extra money because they feel that all the funds the Corps is getting through collection, through the fee-added tax, should be spent on navigation and not on the environment. And they look at the additional \$3 million in the GREAT study as largely being spent on environmental enhancements.

Q: Environmentalists aren't happy with it either, are they?

A: Well, no one is because, I think, it's a balanced plan. Obviously, we tried to swim in the middle of the river. We tried to do those things that we thought were environmentally sensitive as a trade-off. The whole report was put together by a committee and different special interest groups. So obviously it is a compromise report. And everybody who had to compromise is concerned. The Coast Guard is concerned about reduced depth of dredging. The navigation

industry is concerned about increased barge traffic. But I think it is a balanced plan and a significant improvement over what we had ten years ago.

Q: Is the Red River basin still a primary area of concern to you?

A: Yes, it is. I have the General scheduled to come up here in early September. We're going to have the conference report on the Red River basin completed. The task force report -- which was worked out with the states of North Dakota and Minnesota -- will soon be finished.

We're going to brief General Smith on our new initiative or innovative ideas on how to solve the problems in the Red River Valley. Basically, we are looking at it as a basin-wide approach. We are looking at all the missions that all the state and federal agencies can perform to make it a better flood-proof plan. We're looking at new initiatives. Some of them are not traditional. And I'm sure that I'm either going to have to sell them or the Corps hierarchy may not buy.

Q: Which ones are these?

A: Well, the most significant is the concept of a technical resource center. We, over the years, provided the states and the watershed districts with technical information and analysis of hydraulics or computer runs of river profiles.

Currently, we are running four different kinds of computer models on the Red River, and the data and information are distributed. We have been paying for that service piecemeal out of General Investigation (GI) funding. There is a trend to change the thrust of the GI funding to identify what we are really doing and call it what it really is. So we came up with the vision that the technical engineering resource center would be a small organization within the St. Paul District that would do the computer modeling and other hydraulic engineering in the valley, and provide that engineering data to the states, watershed districts, and other federal agencies.

The primary benefit to the Corps is to maintain the skills that made the Corps great -- the engineering skills. What the country gets is engineering data going down to the grass roots levels to help decision-makers at those levels make better water resource management decisions.

What's happening now is that those people are making their decisions with inadequate engineering data. Their chances of making a wrong decision in a piecemeal sense that affects the total basin approach are quite great.

What we want to do is help them get better engineering data so they can do their mission better. Now, their mission at the local engineering level is really not infringing on our larger federal mission, so I can't see it as a turf problem. In a sense, having

this resource center is an innovative approach, and the concept of having people and maintenance dollars provided each year to run it may be difficult to sell. Right now, anything new is looked at very closely because you don't have spaces or money to do it.

The technical resource center is a vision that I have for the future. I can see the Corps maintaining engineering groups throughout the country with great engineering expertise in their basins. This would maintain the grass roots level of the Corps' expertise as we continue to lose engineering skills as projects are designed and built. If we don't have some place for these people to work to maintain that center of expertise, when the new missions of the future come along, we won't have the skills to do them.

Q: Ring levees aren't considered that innovative any more? That's pretty accepted?

A: Well, we had a prototype 205 project in a county in North Dakota. We did a recon report and sent it out trying to get the ring levees around the farms done under nonstructural alternatives. It was accepted here. It was accepted by local people, but I have a feeling that I'm going to have trouble with selling this concept or trying to fund through the small project program. There again it is a new approach and we know the age-old fright about trying to get people in the system to look at something new. If it's new, it should be justified; I support that concept. We don't want to go off half-cocked and do something that doesn't make much sense.

Q: Sure. It is being considered in Washington now?

A: No, the Red River basically is going to be pushed in two directions. One is flood protection, because it has a history of flooding. The other is drought contingency. One of our findings on a basin-wide approach is that we're in a cycle where we have plenty of water. But if we go back to conditions like in the thirties, when we had very little water, then water conservation contingency is a very big deal. We're asking for quite a bit of money in FY 83 to start drought and water conservation contingency planning. So I would see the Red River going in two directions. We've got to continue to provide flood protection, and we've got to have this drought and water conservation contingency planning.

Q: Drought and flooding are just two sides of the same coin.

A: That's right, and now we're looking at only one side.

Q: In the year coming up you mention a Planning Division that is being considered and developed now. What other plans do you have for institutionalizing the programs that you've developed?

A: Well, when we started out the first year, I didn't like my computer shop. Now we have the new Harris computer. We've been hiring college students, co-ops, and masters degree level students from St. Olaf College who studied on the Harris 500 and they are adapting all our software. By the time I leave here, we're going to have the

computer operation squared away. We recently let a contract to buy the automatic word processors. This equipment will be compatible with the Harris, so we'll have a lot of flexibility in automatic word processing.

We've improved office spaces. We've had a number of walking tours and inspections. We're now giving our people a more comfortable place to work.

We have been concerned about the management of the District. So we started what I call the "decentralization and delegation system" and the use of the corporate body concept. This includes training the project managers, alternating the different types of staff meeting, and briefing me on different projects on a monthly basis. We incorporated a strategy session every two months with the Chief of Engineering, the Chief of Planning, and the Chief of Program Development where we lay out the strategy of the District.

We have worked on and are developing our ten-year plan. We wanted a 20-year plan and weren't able to do it. So we cranked back and now we call it a five-to-ten-year plan. And we are looking at that so we can get our strategy set in the out years. The only real planning the District does is the planning required to get the budget together. We talk about the '82 budget, which is the one coming right around the corner, but we plan for what is in the FY 83 budget. If it weren't for those budget exercises, some Districts wouldn't really do any long-term planning.

I've written a management by objectives regulation for the District, I have taken all the things we've been doing management wise and put them in that regulation. I felt very pleased with the recent visit of the Inspector General (IG). We told him what our management philosophy was and he went down and talked to all the people and said, "Hey, it's working." This was one of the few Districts he's seen where every 15 minutes they don't run to the head shed to ask for a decision.

We delegate it down so the people who should be making the decisions, at the project manager level and the branch and division chief level, are making them. I think to institutionalize you have to put it in regulations. You have to get it down in black and white and use it so that people are familiar with it. Then the next manager who comes in, hopefully, will fine-tune it and continue the established management technique.

Q: I hope you share it with me before I leave today.

A: Oh, would you like a copy? I'd be happy to give you one. I recently realized that we didn't have a mechanism for sharing good ideas from one District to the next. I wrote General Smith and recommended that the IG be given a new mission -- to be the mechanism for sharing good ideas. The way I envision this working is that the IG would come in with a 30-minute new idea briefing, or a "lesson learned" document he picked up in his visits to the

Districts. This would always be a changing list and the District Engineer would see the good ideas being developed, and the good things being done in other Districts.

Q: The constant exposure. What have been your greatest challenges and problems this year?

A: Well, we had a little problem. Some of the people from one of the dredges falsified travel vouchers, a travel fraud.

We caught this in the office and we started an investigation. We found that it was pretty extensive. We called the FBI and they completed an investigation of 12 people. Working with the U.S. attorney, they indicted the four worst cases and tried them. I took the hard position of having the people go to court in a criminal prosecution. However, the judicial system was very inconsistent. Of the four cases indicted, one pleaded guilty, one was found not guilty, one was found guilty, and one case was thrown out of court.

Q: Every possibility.

A: Like rolling dice. There was an article in a local paper about justice rolling dice which referred to this case.

Q: When did this take place? When were the trials?

A: The trials were conducted about two months ago. I think my PAO (Public Affair Officer) would probably have the article I was talking about. The U.S. attorney came to me and said, "Colonel Badger, I think there is such inconsistency in the federal court, I would like to give you the cases back so that you could take care of them administratively." Of course, I'm doing that. During the trial it came out through some of the witnesses and some other things that maybe the fraudulent practice was more wide-spread than just the dozen. So I formed another inspection team and we went back, and the number of suspected individuals may approach 30.

I'm not sure where it's going, but my approach has been that you obviously cannot tolerate this and we should take a firm stand. So we are suspending people and collecting all the money back for the government. We are making it part of the individual's official record. I feel that some of the penalties are quite heavy.

One worker who had vouchers running back for a number of years, maybe from the '75 time frame, falsified vouchers worth quite a sum of money, thousands and thousands of dollars. His probation officer came to me, and he ran through the list of things that had happened to him since he made those false travel claims. One, he hired a lawyer at \$11,000. Two, he was convicted. Three, he lost \$800 worth of work during the trial. He is being suspended three days for each bad voucher, so that's another suspension of 69 days or about \$7,000 worth. When you total up the payback, this man's indiscretion has cost him about \$33,000, plus the adverse publicity,

the mental duress and the stress of the FBI investigation, the stress of going to federal court, and the publicity in the newspapers afterward. So we felt we took very strong action toward these people. I feel there will be a signal sent throughout the Corps that you can't get away with travel voucher fraud.

So I spent quite a bit of time that I didn't want to spend on this personnel problem, but being Commander, the District Engineer, I had no choice.

Q: During this period, what happened to your ability to manage your program?

A: Well, we decentralized and we delegated. We have a corporate body of 30 to 35 good people running this District. So if I am out of the net by being up at the International Joint Commission meetings, or if I'm out at a project, or if I'm handling a travel voucher fraud case, the District still runs, because it is a corporate entity. It is not dependent on any one person. That's the beauty of decentralizing and delegating. The other benefit is that you train the young managers and then when it's their turn, they will do a better job. I think that the decentralizing I've done here, the delegation, and all the training of the executives is going to pay great dividends for the next three District Engineers. But it has also paid dividends to me because I didn't have to be here with my hand on the throttle every day.

Q: You can turn your back.

A: You can turn your back and be assured that things run well.

Q: What other significant challenges have you had in this past year?

A: I think that probably the realization that you have to change your method of operation to get projects through the system.

We here always worked through the system. If something is wrong, you work with your higher headquarters, and you try to move projects through the Corps system. I guess maybe in the last few months I have come to realize that my three years are running out and that I'm not moving projects. The projects are not getting through the system.

I guess I realize that I have to stir the pot more, that I have to go to the congressmen and senators, build fires under our people, and that we have to work projects through the Corps system and through the political system. I have come to the conclusion for my last year I can't just wait until all the minutia is done before sending a project forward, and the technocrats or the termites, the minutia people at that level, ask a lot of questions and send it back. I can't live with a system that runs back and forth between termites. What I have to do is wrap up my projects, kick them up to the higher headquarters, and encourage General Smith to support me and pass them up to higher headquarters.

What you do is find yourself going outside the system, getting the language written into law so that the Corps system is short-circuited. That bothered me because philosophically you want to support the system, you want to support your boss, and you want to work through the chain of command. On the other hand, if I'm going to move some projects out, then I've got to go both ways.

Q: How does the OCE react to this?

A: I think the key managers, the General Smiths and the General Heibergs, understand the system and they probably say "Fine, he's getting the work done." And they will probably be tolerant. At least I hope so. The technocrats will never own up that they are technocrats and they are the termites trying to sink your wooden ship.

Q: Of course, General Heiberg came up through the same system you came through, right?

A: That's right, but it took me a while to get to the point where I was saying, "Hey, I can't be a good soldier alone and get it done. I've got to be a good soldier and I'm going to be a good manager, but I've got to work on it in more than one direction." So far I'm doing this. My projects are getting attention. Things are happening and I haven't been called down. But it makes me feel uneasy, because it is not what you'd think the standard DE role would be. I have the fear, Mickey, that I'm going to finish my tour

and that I've not done everything I was supposed to do in getting my projects built. So I guess at the end I'm beginning to reach the point where, damn it, I've got to push something through. I've got to get this done. I've got to clean that up. So this year, I'm going to push and pull and yell and scream and see what happens.

Q: I want to remind you that two years ago you told me you saw the District as tending toward being in the reactive role -- reacting to NCD (North Central Division), reacting to OCE, reacting to the congressional delegation, and so on. You're taking the District out of that kind of role though with this kind of activity, aren't you?

A: Well, when you go political, or you start stirring the pot, then people are put under pressure. So we find ourselves still reacting to get information out. But I think that as a management style, we in the District now are planning out one year, we're looking to the future in our strategy sessions. We know where we have to work and where we have to put our manpower. So we're getting ahead of the problems by creating outside influences, by working both sides of the street. We get short-fused inquiries now because people need this data or that data to help handle the pressures. I guess we are doing better on anticipating problems, we're doing better on managing and not being in the reactive mode in management. But when you stir the pot, something will bubble up and you have to be in a reactive mode to handle that bubble.

Q: I guess District Engineers do need close relations with congressional delegations. Are you suggesting that a District Engineer ought to go out and actively seek help from the congressional delegation by saying, "This is what we are doing, this is what I need"?

A: Oh, absolutely. Most District Engineers do this. Most of them are visiting their congressmen and senators on a yearly basis. But there is a tendency as a new District Engineer not to speak out. So the tendency the first year when you visit your congressmen is to smile and listen and not stir the pot because you have enough to keep you busy.

Q: Right.

A: And the second year, you stir half the pot because you are busy within your own organization. But your third year you say, "My gosh, I'm leaving," so you are more actively stirring the pot.

One reason is because you are more knowledgeable. Another is because you want to get things done before you leave. So a third-year District Engineer is much more effective than the first-year District Engineer in getting things done.

That is why I recommended to General Heiberg the big brother system, because each incoming District Engineer needs to get a feel for how things are done. I felt that since we don't have a school for

District Engineers, one approach would be the big brother approach. An incoming District Engineer would visit a third-year District Engineer and spend three or four days with him and they would share ideas, techniques, and comments.

The big brother program was cut by the Deputy Chief because of travel funds. I believe the program would have worked well and I'm a little disappointed that it didn't catch on.

Q: What are the major challenges you foresee in the next year here?

A: Well, I think we're going to have problems getting monies. I think we're going to have problems with continuing manpower cuts. And the challenges there will be to fence off the heart and soul of the District so that you're not cutting out the skills that will significantly reduce our capability to do good water resource projects for the people.

I think we are going to see caps or upper limits put on budgets. If you have a budget of \$100 million, obviously people are not going to look favorably at an increase to \$120 million. It will require some long-range planning to figure out which monies to ask for in a priority sense to do the most good and be under the limit. I think with the Reagan administration you are going to see many caps. You're going to have to plan your program so you can work on those projects that have the most economic benefits for the people. I

think the long-range plan is going to be very essential, because you're going to have to work to get the best projects done within those limitations.

Q: How did the rotation of branch chiefs in the Construction-Operation Division work?

A: I have a story that typifies the advantage to a District of rotating branch chiefs. We moved all four branch chiefs in the Construction-Operations Division, construction supervisor to regulatory, regulatory to construction, project operations to maintenance dredging, maintenance dredging to project operations. Two months later we were getting ready to brief General Smith, the new Division Engineer. Each of the branch chiefs had about a 20-minute briefing on their branch. The briefings were rescheduled to a nighttime setting and one of the branch chiefs had a sick wife and went home. And so, in the eleventh hour, the former branch chief briefed his current branch and then an hour later briefed his old branch, and did an outstanding job on both. Isn't it wonderful to have people there who understand both branch functions? Currently, one branch chief has had experience in three of the four branches. So when he is acting Division Chief he is much more able. Each of the branch chiefs had misgivings about the changes. I have talked to all of them since and they are now all enthusiastic and convinced that we did the right thing.

I think the real advantage for the Corps of Engineers is that we have broadened the base for each of the managers and have improved the quality of the executive. We've made each of those supervisors better qualified to compete for the next higher position when it comes along. I have the feeling it will be looked on very positively by the other divisions and other branch chiefs and it will make it easier for me to do an executive development throughout the District. Since then the Division Engineer has put out an executive development regulation which is very supportive of our program.

Q: Have you carried it over to the other divisions?

A: Yes, we've moved two section chiefs in the Engineering Division. We have moved all the section chiefs in the Comptroller's shop. We're going to build in the executive development program when we go to a Planning Division and Engineering Division concept. By the time I leave here most everyone will have a chance to work in a new job, with a positive long-term impact on the organization.

Q: What other efforts have you made this year to increase that sense of corporate responsibility and cohesion that you talked about last year?

A: Well, a lot of ideas, jobs, or actions come up that have to be tried. We have to have the corporate body enter the discussion so that it can develop good ideas and good concepts.

When we had General Smith or other VIP visits, we've let all our project managers brief. On the next visit, we let all our branch chiefs brief. On the last visit, we had our section chiefs brief. So we've made sure that everyone in the corporate entity is getting visibility and is participating.

We've insured that project managers brief the District Engineer monthly. The section chiefs and the branch chiefs answer in a feedback role to the successes and failures. I think that by sharing the work and sharing the success with the corporate body we have started making these people feel that they are part of the corporate body.

Q: General Smith's reaction was pretty good, too.

A: Yes, he has let me use the corporate body approach, delegation and decentralization. The key disadvantage to this approach is that the decision-maker, the District Engineer, has to have feedback to know what's going on. If you delegate and let somebody else do all the work and make decisions, then it is very easy, if they don't communicate with you, to have a serious breakdown in communications. My managers have been very good about feeding me information and I've made a strong effort by notes, letters, and phone calls to keep General Smith informed.

He's been very good about not getting on my turf and he has let me do my thing. His only concern is, "Don't surprise me." I think that because we keep him informed, he feels comfortable with what we're doing. He has endorsed it and supported it.

The Engineer Inspector General who has inspected us, who liked our management style and the high morale of the people, lived next door to General Smith and maybe reinforcement from the Engineer Inspector General convinced the General that the St. Paul District is running well and the system is working.

Q: I don't know if you mind getting back to this, but you talk about your morale and your corporate body, and this travel fraud thing must have been a real shock to you.

A: Well, no, because I guess human nature being what it is, we are not all perfect and we all make mistakes. It was kind of isolated among the crew on one dredge. That dredge throughout the summer would move up and down the river, and those people are traveling quite a bit. The fraud started happening in the '75-'76 time frame. I picked up on it in 1979. Now the morale on the dredge obviously is very low because all of the crew want to see the black cloud moved and just get back to normal.

This is an isolated area of low morale. I think when the majority of people see that they have submitted correct travel vouchers all

these years and when someone does wrong they are punished, this doesn't tend to lower morale of the people who do what is right. In fact, it may increase their morale.

Q: How has your relationship with the press been?

A: I started out with the Badger philosophy of openness and everything done in a fishbowl. And we have a little different PAO concept here. My Public Affairs Officer doesn't necessarily do all the coordination with the press. He runs the office and does the PAO planning. But our project managers and our project engineers have the authority to speak to the press or TV and make statements. The only thing I ask of them is to tell the truth, tell it like it is, and give your name. Own up to the fact that you are the person talking. I don't like these statements, "Some Corps official said." And so, by delegating that authority down and allowing them to talk openly to the press, they come across as being open and not trying to cover up. So we don't have a lot of digging and scratching and reporters coming to me with embarrassing questions. I've used that open approach and we haven't been burnt yet in two years. Knock on wood.

Q: Last year was pretty good then?

A: It was very good. We have continued with this open window policy, allowing everyone in the District to speak to the press. I'm convinced that is the way to go.

Because if you gag your people and they don't come across, the reporter has to talk to the Colonel to get the word. Then it comes across as a cover-up because I'm not as prepared as the project manager would be, and the good or straight information is delayed in getting to the press. So I would feel that this aspect of our public affairs is good.

Now, obviously, you get the opinions of people in the press who don't agree with what you're doing. Obviously, the press writes up the proponent's and the opponent's points of view. But at least the articles are coming out and are factual. And at least the opponent's point of view doesn't, in most cases, misquote us.

Q: As far as how you are getting along with your congressional delegation, I think you were telling me last year that you had disagreements with quite a lot of them, but your relations were cordial and open. Has that held?

A: I'm not sure how many we've had disagreements with. I think that the congressional people could be put in different categories. Some are very active in water resources. Others are not. Their specialty may be social programs, social security, financing, and so

forth and they are not active in my programs. So how active a congressman or senator is will be predicated on whether there is a critical project in his area. If he is subjected to a groundswell of local pressure, then he is going to be interested.

Whether the project is developed to a decision point is also important. Or is that project at a point where he can enter the net and do something constructive with it? So we briefed those local congressmen who have an active interest, who have local support for a project, who are trying to do something. We have a couple of congressmen whom we hear from only on a regulatory matter when they are contacted by a constituent. So I won't say there are disagreements. I guess there are different levels at which the congressman wants to be engaged in the Corps' programs. I don't think we have anybody in our congressional delegation who is anti-Corps.

Q: Is it Senator Durenberger from Minnesota who wanted more state involvement?

A: Senator Durenberger has been very active and I worked with him quite a bit. He wants to be very supportive. I think he was quite a supporter of the Moynihan-Domenici bill, which supported federal grants to the states with a priority of water projects within the states, where funds would be transferred from the states to the Corps. I don't think that would help any. I think what helps is

trying to improve what we are doing project-to-project. But I think Senator Durenberger was concerned that the Corps' planning process was not moving fast enough and this was one means of making it move faster. This was a change. I feel that this is the wrong change. Or maybe we are not ready for that change.

Q: I'd like to question you about a few specific aspects of the District's program. For instance, Operation Foresight. Is the District still involved in Operation Foresight?

A: Operation Foresight was a snowpack emergency in the '68-'69 time frame. Snow pack in this part of the country was related directly to a flood situation if you had rapid thawing and melting. Operation Foresight set the groundwork for a lot of things that happened in Public Law 99 emergency funding. One was that you could spend emergency funds before the emergency. And Foresight was the mover of that policy decision. It was a good decision. We in this area went through Foresight, which was quite extensive in the potential flood areas. Today you can see evidence of Operation Foresight in almost every community in the Red River Valley. We have detailed plans and have identified people who will go out and be area engineers at various locations. So we carry out extensive emergency planning for our area, and this was probably a fallout from Foresight. Foresight itself we don't use.

Q: I see.

A: Now one thing I should say is we haven't had the major floods in my two years as District Engineer. The Corps performs superbly in a flooding situation. It is where we get the highest marks, the highest visibility. That's where we help the people the most -- during emergency floods.

Q: Two or three weeks ago you had substantial floods.

A: We had some high water in Rochester, but not really a flood. So I guess my last chance at fighting floods will be next year. In the fall I plan to have all my emergency plans reviewed. We'll have a planning exercise (CPX) to be sure that if in March, April, or May of next year we have floods, the St. Paul District does well. I think it is crucial that the Corps continues to do well in emergency situations.

Q: What is the status of Lock and Dam 1 now?

A: Lock and Dam 1, as you remember, Mickey, is the four-year, \$44 million rehab of a 50-year-old lock. We had a situation where we had to close the river in December, de-water the lock, work until 1 May, and reopen the lock so that we had river transportation during the summers. We put a condition on ourselves of doing work during the winter and not being allowed a slip in the schedule. We accomplished all the blasting, put it back together, and opened the

lock on 26 April, about five days before the 1 May suspense that I gave Congress and the Port of Minneapolis authorities.

This year we went into the lock again. We kept finding changes and poor site conditions. We had to accelerate the contract, like we did the year before.

We had many modifications to contend with but still we opened the lock on 2 May, missing the target by one day. I feel that when the Corps promised the people, the river interests, and the port interests that we would have the river open, we had to live up to our promise. It is a good project and Lock and Dam 1 is in good operational shape. We're getting ready to let the stage 2 contract. By this time next year we ought to be in great shape with a completion date scheduled for around September 1982. It has been a good project and it's been a good training vehicle in contract management and administration for the engineers of this District. The capabilities of the people in this District are much greater now than they were three years ago when we bid this project.

Q: Last year you mentioned the utility of the nine-foot channel in the event of mobilization. What's the District's role in mobilization planning?

A: Mobilization planning has been getting a lot of visibility. We've had Mobex '78 and now Mobex '80. We tried to get out front in mobilization planning and we conducted the workshop on mobilization planning for NCD. I increased the manpower in that area from one to four. I put a lieutenant into the function, so we were getting green suit visibility.

Our mobilization plan has been completed and published. When we get the OCE-NCD plan, we'll adjust our plan to be sure that we are in sync. We have identified many things and lessons learned in Mobex '80.

Also, we have identified in-house a lot of things that we want to do to improve the operation of the nine-foot channel in case of mobilization. Basically, I felt that the security of the locks and dams could be improved. Maybe resiting of security fences. Maybe removing a tree here and there. Maybe some better lighting or some TV monitoring cameras. Then in the event of potential sabotage, we would have better security. Knowing that no system would be foolproof though, we have to analyze what would happen if a saboteur got into one of the locks and dams. Probably the weak link would be the miter gates, so we did an interchangeability study on miter gates. We knew the dimensions of all miter gates and we could change the gate at one location to another location. In our miter gate interchangeability study, we coordinated with the Division and

we are looking at interchangeability Division-wide. We are looking at some spare miter gates. We're looking at a barge loading and unloading facility up and down from each lock and dam, because if something happened to your locking capability and you had a barge loading and unloading site, that would give you two advantages.

You would have the capability to bring in your rock and construction material to do repairs, or you could do a portage operation.

We are trying to make improvements between Mobex '80 and '82, so that when Mobex '82 does come down we can say, "Hey, here are the things we've done, month by month, in the last two years. You can't wait until the mobilization exercises and try to do them during that 30-day exercise. You've got to be continually working on mobilization capability.

Q: Still the best job in the world?

A: Oh, no doubt the District Engineer position is the best job in the world. No place in the Army where you have the autonomy, where you have the freedom of running an organization, where you have the organization that has the capability to do the planning, to do the engineering, to do the building. We're self-contained at the District level. And to manage an organization with a \$60-million budget and 850 people doing important, vital work for the nation and helping the people in the region, protecting them from floods, this

is rewarding. It is obviously the best job I've had. Probably the only disadvantage of the job is that it is only three years long, and I don't think the Army will have another job that is so great to put me in after this one is finished.

Q: It's not really autonomous, is it?

A: Amazingly, if you read the laws, most of the decisions are the District Engineer's decisions. Obviously, no job is ever such that you don't have a boss. But I think that probably within the Army system, or the federal government system, the District Engineer more fully runs his organization than any other boss I've seen. Even with controversy, I don't know of a single incident in two years where someone came in with the role of the Monday morning quarterback and criticized a decision, a judgment, or an action. Most people in the Corps system support the District Engineer and most of them are there to help. I think the Corps is a very healthy organization. We don't have people running around in Washington or other places second-guessing the District Engineer or making him change his decision or firing him. So I would say it is a damn good job.

Q: Anything else I should ask you this morning?

A: I'm trying to think of the different subject areas we could run through. We've talked about the most important things: the

mission, people, money, the future, the past. I guess we could close by saying that the District continues to be healthy and well, and that it continues to become leaner with the personnel cuts, but performs better. But I guess I have a certain fear that there's no more fat in the system.

That if we keep cutting, we're cutting muscle now. I continue to be concerned that we in the Corps grow with the times and that we continue to adjust our mission to the needs of the people. I would hope that we would continue to be innovative and that we would look for our new mission that we can help people with and not wait until the problems are so large that we don't have time to adequately solve them.

But after two years I regret that I didn't have a long-range plan earlier, so that I could have started quicker on some things. Ultimately you begin to have fears that you are running out of time to accomplish what you want to accomplish. But you hope sincerely that your contribution will be lasting and important.